

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/790,217

Examiner

Katherine W. Mitchell

Applicant(s)

YONEOKA, AKIRA

Art Unit

3677

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 2/20/2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-12, 14-17 and 19-21.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☒ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☒ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date 20070131.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date <u>20070131</u> . |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The following changes to the drawings have been approved by the examiner and agreed upon by applicant: Fig 1 drawing submitted 12/21/2006 has been approved.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Scott Tulino on Feb 5, 15 and 20, 2007.

Examiner sincerely appreciates Mr. Tulino's professionalism and cooperation in working to arrive at patentable subject matter, and examiner apologizes for requiring Mr. Tulino to consider multiple examiner amendments.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the Claims:

Claim 1 line 9 has been amended to replace "a plurality of slits" with --a plurality of longitudinal slits--.

Claim 1 line 17 has been amended to replace "a plurality of rib walls" with --a plurality of longitudinal rib walls--.

Claim 1, the last 3 lines "wherein a distance from the flange portion of said grommet to a tip of said leg portion of said grommet is greater than a distance from said head portion of said pin to a tip of said shaft portion of said pin." Have been deleted and replaced with --wherein the maximum distance from the flange portion of said grommet

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to a tip of said leg portion of said grommet is greater than the maximum distance from said head portion of said pin to a tip of said shaft portion of said pin.--

Claim 9 line 5 has been amended to replace "a plurality of slits" with --a plurality of longitudinal slits--.

Claim 9 line 22 has been amended to replace "a plurality of rib walls" with --a plurality of longitudinal rib walls--.

Claim 9, the last 3 lines "wherein a distance from the flange portion of said grommet to a tip of said leg portion of said grommet is greater than a distance from said head portion of said pin to a tip of said shaft portion of said pin." have been deleted and replaced with --wherein the maximum distance from the flange portion of said grommet to a tip of said leg portion of said grommet is greater than the maximum distance from said head portion of said pin to a tip of said shaft portion of said pin.--

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The prior art of record does not teach or make obvious the claimed limitations of the independent claims, noting that "the maximum distance from the flange portion of said grommet to a tip of said leg portion of said grommet is greater than the maximum distance from said head portion of said pin to a tip of said shaft portion of said pin" does not allow the distance to be considered from any point on the flange or head except the outermost surface furthest from the tip -- a distance from the underside cannot be considered as meeting the limitation. Note in particular that Asami, US 5568675 cited in the foreign search report, is overcome, as it cannot be considered in any way to have longitudinal ribs on the pin shaft outer periphery, and cannot be considered to have the relationship

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of maximum lengths as claimed. Note that Tanaka US 6481942 and Arisaka US 6048147 do not meet the maximum distance relationships claimed.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Katherine W. Mitchell whose telephone number is 571-272-7069. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Thurs 10 AM - 8 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J. J. Swann can be reached on 571-272-7075. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Katherine W Mitchell
Primary Examiner
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2/21/2007

Approved
Kelly
2/20/07

1/5



FIG. 1

